(c) what action Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Government has not been spreading any misinformation on the subject.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Trade Agreement with Czech Republic

729. DR. SANJAYA SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India and the Czech Republic have recently signed a trade agreement; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of India and the Government of the Czech Republic signed an Agreement on Trade and Economic cooperation at New Delhi on March 15, 1993.

(b) The following are the more salient details of the Agreement :

(i) promotion of bilateral trade and economic cooperation on a long term and stable basis;

(ii) mutual Most-Favoured-Nation treatment;

(iii) all payments of a commercial and non-commercial nature in freely convertible currencies;

(iv) promotion of close cooperation such as through joint ventures, trade fairs and exchange of information;

(v) setting up of a Joint Committee which would examine the possibilities of increasing and diversifying mutual trade and economic relations;

(vi) counter trade and other internationally recognised forms of business cooperation; and

(vii) arrangements for liquidation of the rupee balances to the credit of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, through import of goods and services from India.

The Agreement is valid in the first instance for a period of five years with the provision of automatic successive extensions.

Business Turnover of M/s. Hindustan Lever

730. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total turnover of M/s. Hindustan Lever Bros., Bombay in Business with foreign countries during the last three years alongwith the names of those countries and amount in detail; and

(b) whether any country has expressed its dissatisfatction over any of such deals and complained to Government and if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Ministry of Commerce does not maintain company-wise figures of export. However, as per the date provided by the country itself, the export turnover of M/s. Hindustan Lever Ltd. alongwith the regions where exports have been made, during the last 3 years, is indicated below :

(Rs. in crores)

	1990	1991	1992
U.S.S.R./East Europe	48.25	37.57	3.61
West Europe	34.54	62.42	88.97

	1990	1991	1992
West Asia/North Africa	55.66	66.14	73.21
Japan/Baharain	5.94	15.55	32.05
U.S.A./Canada	4.60	11.01	12.03
Others	--	0.72	0.99
Total	148.99	193.41	230.86

Note: These exports are exclusive of incentives.

(b) No such complaint has been received by the Ministry of Commerce from any country.

Suggestion on Forming Trade Blocs

731. SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL: SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any suggestion to form trading blocs of its own with Indonesia, Philippines and Singapore;

(b) if so, what are the details of the suggestion and what is the reaction of Government thereon; and

(c) the steps taken|likely to be taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (c) In a recent paper titled 'Export Promotion Strategy for India', FIEO has suggested that the possibilities of wokring out a strong trade|economic linkage with Indonesia|Philippines|Singapore should be explored.

India and ASEAN have established a sectoral dialogue covering such areas as trading, investment and tourism. The aim of this exercise is to promote tade and economic exchanges between the two sides within the multilateral trading system established under the GATT.

India prefers the multilateral to the regional approach because the former offers the greatest promise for expansion of world trade.

Import of Metals

732. SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH : SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the total quantity of copper brass and other metals imported during the years 1991-92 and 1992-93;

(b) whether domestic consumption and import of copper, brass and other metals are steadily increasing;

(c) if so, the measures taken or proposed to be taken by Government to cope with the shortage of these metals; and

(d) the details of the steps taken or proposed to be taken to import the above metals during the year 1993-94 ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a)